Mobile hospitals for disaster management

3978. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have started mobile hospital plan to cope with natural calamities in the country;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that these do not seem to be able to fulfil its aim especially after Tsunami calamity; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Following Tsunami disaster Government of India along with the States/UTs have mounted massive relief and rescue operations. Hon'ble Minister for Health & F.W. spearheaded the medical relief activities. More than 290 doctors including public health and mental health experts and 99 paramedics drawn from Central Government Institutions were deputed to the affected areas for medical relief activities. Adequate quantity of drugs, disinfectants and insecticides were provided to the affected States/UTs.

Public health measures included diseases surveillance, ensuring safe drinking water supply, vector control measures, immunization against measles, vitamin A supplementation and health education. Except for sporadic cases of diarrhoea, respiratory tract infection etc. there had been no outbreak of diseases. Mental health professional provided community based psychosocial support including training of volunteers to continue the activities.

To augment the quick response for drastic management, Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is procuring a self-contained, container based mobile hospital. International Competitive Bids have been invited and commissioning is likely to be completed by the end of 2005.

Iodine Deficient Disorders

3979. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that deficiency in the intake of iodine causes goitre and other Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD);